



Lt. Governor Skillman Wraps Up the 2010 Legislative Session *With no tax increases, session considered a victory*

In our administration, we don't like to take a year off from reform, but sometimes just escaping harm is a victory.

At 1 a.m. Saturday morning, nearly 48 hours before legislators were required to finish their work, the 2010 legislative session came to a close. Our goal to protect Hoosiers from harm - including preventing tax increases – was achieved.

Our biggest win this year was the passage of property tax cap legislation. Legislators from both houses quickly gave their approval to allow voters to decide in November whether or not to amend the state's constitution to permanently cap property taxes at 1 percent for their homes' assessed value, 2 percent for farm property and 3 percent for businesses. We know this has saved Hoosiers almost a billion dollars, and now we have an opportunity to prevent future legislatures from increasing taxes on a whim.

To keep our budget balanced, we continue to look for cost saving measures, and we were pleased that legislators approved some of our ideas. They approved our proposal to merge administrations of two state pension funds. Pensioners will see no changes, but the state will pay millions less to the people who manage those funds.

And Indiana schools were given more flexibility with their budget. They will soon be able to move their funds around, so that more money can go to the classroom.

Unemployment insurance premium increases have also been delayed by a year.



Lt. Gov. Skillman talks with WTHR Reporter Kevin Rader last month in the Statehouse about the progress of the legislative session. The 2010 session came to a close on Saturday.

While nearly all 50 states are struggling with deficits in their UI funds, Indiana businesses were granted relief, protecting many Hoosier jobs.

There were many other bills passed during the 2010 legislative session from gun owner rights to legislative ethics to child support measures. Go to, <http://www.in.gov/gov/billwatch.htm>, to find out more.

We are already preparing for the next session that begins in January 2011. Protecting Hoosiers from harm was a challenge during this session, but the work will be even harder during next year's budget-writing session. Between now and then, Governor Mitch and I will continue to look for every opportunity to save tax dollars and improve the services the state provides.

Becky Skillman



Lt. Governor Skillman oversees the Indiana Department of Agriculture, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, the Office of Energy Development, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs, and the Office of Tourism Development. For more, visit her on the web at www.lg.in.gov.